

**QFR Responses**  
**DR. STEVE H. MURDOCK**  
**Director, Hobby Center for the Study of Texas, and**  
**Allyn R. and Gladys M. Cline Professor of Sociology at Rice University**  
**May 16, 2018**

Dr. Murdock:

Thank you again for your valuable input at the Constitution Subcommittee Hearing on the 2020 Census. To help complete the record, we hope that you could respond to the two additional questions listed below. If you could return these responses by COB Tuesday, June 19, that would be greatly appreciated.

**Question 1. In a memo, dated January 19, 2018, Dr. John Abowd, Associate Director for Research and Methodology for the Census Bureau, warned that adding a citizenship question “harms the quality of the census count.” He further noted that, “Three distinct analyses support the conclusion of an adverse impact on self-response and, as a result, on the accuracy and quality of the 2020 Census.”**

**Given this conclusion from the Bureau’s chief statistical expert, can you comment on whether Secretary Ross’ decision memorandum adequately reflected input from Census Bureau’s statistical analysts.**

Murdock Response: I concur with Dr. Abowd. Those who suggest that adding questions about immigrant status will not negatively impact the rate of response to the decennial census of such persons are simply poorly informed. The logic is clear that if I am not a citizen and I am aware of new U.S. policies on immigrants, I am likely to be fearful of being deported and likely to not respond to census questions that would identify me as an immigrant. One might not respond to the census at all or falsely report the answer to the citizenship question. The actions suggested by Secretary Ross are likely to both further inhibit undocumented immigrants from seeking appropriate status but to also negatively impact the immigration of persons who would increase the number of persons with specialized skills and laborers who perform many nontechnical skills essential to our economy. I am confident that additional interaction of commerce with census officials will provide more accurate information.

**Question 2. In your testimony, you stated that, “despite the fact that data apparently have been successfully collected on citizenship status for some purposes, I am concerned about how the inclusion of questions that directly solicit information on citizenship and immigration (legal) status from every person residing in the Nation will affect the completeness of the census count for the primary constitutional purpose of the census — the distribution of House seats among the States. “Can you explain why the collection of citizenship data through other survey mechanisms should not lead to any conclusions about the impact of including such a question on the 2020 decennial census ?**